

Message Text

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FOR THE SECRETARY AND SAUNDERS FROM ATHERTON

USDEL NO. 34

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR PEPR PGOV EG IS US
SUBJECT: FINAL MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL
AUGUST 1

REF: CAIRO 18113 (USDEL 33)

1. AT MY REQUEST WE HELD A TWO-HOUR MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL TUESDAY AFTERNOON AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO REVIEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED DURING MY VISIT HERE AND TO ASK KAMEL HOW THE EGYPTIAN SIDE SEES THE PEACE PROCESS MOVING AHEAD IN AN OPERATIONAL SENSE SINCE THEY HAVE NOT AGREED TO THE FURTHER ROUND OF DIRECT TALKS WHICH HAD BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR PREFERRED SCENARIO. PRESENT ON THE EGYPTIAN SIDE WERE KAMEL, AHMED MAHER AND USAMA AL-BAZ; ON OUR SIDE, AMBASSADOR EILTS, STERNER, SHERMAN AND MYSELF.

2. I BEGAN WITH A GENERAL RUNDOWN ON THE SECRETARY'S
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ITINERARY FOR HIS COMING TRIP, STATING THAT HE PLANS TO ARRIVE IN JERUSALEM LATE ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 5, HOLD MEETINGS IN ISRAEL ON THE 6TH AND THE MORNING OF THE 7TH, AND THEN PROCEED TO ALEXANDRIA ABOUT MID-DAY OF THE 7TH FOR TALKS THAT DAY AND THE FOLLOWING BEFORE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON ON THE 9TH. KAMEL WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT THE SECRETARY DOES NOT PLAN TO GO TO SAUDI

ARABIA AND JORDAN DURING THIS TRIP, MAKING CLEAR THAT HE FELT THE SECRETARY SHOULD GO THERE--PARTICULARLY TO SAUDI ARABIA--BECAUSE "THESE PEOPLE CAN BE HELPFUL." AS FAR AS THE SECRETARY'S STAY IN EGYPT IS CONCERNED, KAMEL STRESSED THAT PRESIDENT SADAT AND HE WILL BE DELIGHTED TO SEE THE SECRETARY. HE NOTED THAT SINCE IT WILL BE RAMADAN, SADAT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PREFER TO SEE THE SECRETARY IN THE EVENING, AND EILTS ASSURED HIM THAT WE WERE ALREADY PROCEEDING ON THAT ASSUMPTION. KAMEL SAID THAT HE HIMSELF DOES NOT FAST, SO NO PROBLEM EXISTS IN ARRANGING MEETINGS AT ANY TIME WITH HIM.

3. I EXPLAINED THE PURPOSE OF MY MEETING, TRYING TO DRAW KAMEL OUT ON THEIR IDEAS ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS, BUT HIS THOUGHTS ON THAT SUBJECT DID NOT COME FORWARD UNTIL LATE IN THE CONVERSATION, AFTER I HAD PRESSED HIM SEVERAL TIMES. WE FIRST TALKED BRIEFLY ABOUT PRESIDENT SADAT'S TALK YESTERDAY WITH SAUDI ARABIA CROWN PRINCE FAHD AND THEN KAMEL LAUNCHED INTO A MONOLOGUE LASTING ALMOST 45 MINUTES ABOUT EGYPTIAN CONCERNS AND WORRIES ABOUT THE "WAVERING" OF THE U.S., PARTICULARLY ITS RELUCTANCE TO CONFRONT ISRAEL ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE.

4. KAMEL HAD RELATIVELY LITTLE DETAIL TO GIVE ABOUT THE SADAT-FAHD TALKS, SAYING THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN IN ON THE PRIVATE TALKS BUT HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE LARGER
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GROUP TALKS. HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT SADAT HAD EXPLAINED TO FAHD WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN HIS RECENT MEETINGS IN AUSTRIA WITH PERES AND THEN WEIZMAN, AS WELL AS WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT THE TALKS IN LEEDS CASTLE IN ENGLAND. THEY HAD ALSO EXCHANGED IDEAS, KAMEL SAID, ABOUT MY VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT. HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT FELT THAT SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT HAD REACHED THE SAME CONCLUSIONS WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF THE PEACE PROCESS. BOTH FELT THAT THE POLICIES OF ISRAEL CAN ONLY LEAD TO DISASTER, PARTICULARLY REGARDING THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, AND THAT FURTHER DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, GIVEN THE ISRAELI POSITION, WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME. BOTH FELT, KAMEL CONTINUED, THAT THE U.S. SHOULD PUSH MORE IN ITS PEACE EFFORTS. "NOW IS THE TIME TO DO SOMETHING," KAMEL SAID, "BOTH SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT ARE COUNTING 100 PERCENT ON THE U.S." HE REPEATED THE FAMILIAR LINE THAT THE ROLE OF "FULL PARTNER" FOR THE U.S. SHOULD "BE MANIFESTED AND IMPLEMENTED." WITHOUT ELABORATING, HE SAID THAT FAHD WAS NOW GOING TO DAMASCUS, AMMAN AND BAGHDAD, AND CONCLUDED THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING AGAIN "WE ARE BOTH PUTTING GREAT HOPES ON YOU NOW." HE ALSO SAID THAT FAHD AND SADAT

HAD SPOKEN ABOUT THE HORN OF AFRICA BUT WENT NO FURTHER.

5. FROM THIS POINT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WENT INTO HIS LONG AND QUITE DETERMINED EXPLANATION OF JUST HOW EGYPT FEELS THE CURRENT IMPASSE HAS BEEN CREATED AND THE REAL DANGERS THAT IMPASSE PRESENTS FOR BOTH MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND THE U.S. IMAGE IN THE AREA. HE BEGAN BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL NOT MISINTERPRET SADAT'S POSITION, AND REVIEWED THE MOVES, SUCH AS GOING TO LEEDS CASTLE, WHICH PRESIDENT SADAT HAD

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MADE OUT OF CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT CARTER. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF EGYPT'S WILLINGNESS TO GO TO LEEDS HAD NOT COME UNTIL VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT WITH PRESIDENT SADAT, PRESS REPORTS A WEEK EARLIER FROM WASHINGTON ABOUT THE CARTER INITIATIVE AND EGYPTIAN WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE HAD EMBARRASSED EGYPT. THEN REPORTS FROM ISRAEL ABOUT THE PROPOSED NEXT ROUND IN THE SINAI HAD GONE SO FAR EVEN TO ANNOUNCE THE DATES IN ADVANCE. ALL THESE PRESS LEAKS MADE IT LOOK TO THE ARAB WORLD THAT EGYPT WAS ENGAGED IN SOME "DIRTY BUSINESS," AND HAD ALREADY REACHED FULL AGREEMENT WITH THE ISRAELIS. THIS HAD ANNOYED PRESIDENT SADAT VERY MUCH, HE SAID. NEXT HE REPEATED HIS IRRITATION WITH THE WORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN LAST WEEK WHO SAID THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE AFTER THE LEEDS TALKS WAS POSITIVE. THE CLEAR IMPLICATION, HE SAID, WAS THAT, BY CONTRAST, THE EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE WAS NEGATIVE.

6. FROM THERE KAMEL WENT ON TO CRITICIZE THE STATEMENT MONDAY BY THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN THAT THE U.S. WAS DISAPPOINTED IN PRESIDENT SADAT'S POSITION. HE COULD NOT

UNDERSTAND, HE SAID, WHY THE U.S. WAS NOT EXPRESSING
DISAPPOINTMENT IN BEGIN'S POSITION. WHAT DID SADAT SAY
THAT WAS SO DISAPPOINTING, HE ASKED RHETORICALLY,
EXCEPT TO SAY THAT EGYPT IS READY FOR PEACE, COOPERATION
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AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, BUT WOULD NOT INCLUDE IN THE
NEGOTIATIONS SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORY. WITH SOME
FEELING, HE ASKED AGAIN WHY THE U.S. SHOULD PUT OUT A
STATEMENT THAT DESCRIBED THIS POSITION AS NEGATIVE. SINCE
PRESIDENT SADAT'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM, HE SAID, IT IS EGYPT
THAT HAS BEEN POSITIVE. YET THE U.S. NOW IS GIVING THE
IMPRESSION THAT IT IS EGYPT THAT IS BACKING AWAY AND THAT
ISRAEL IS BEING POSITIVE. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HOW
THAT IMPRESSION COULD BE ALLOWED, CONSIDERING WHAT DAYAN
HAD SAID AT LEEDS ABOUT ISRAEL'S NEEDING TERRITORY AND
WHAT BEGIN HAD SAID AFTER THE CABINET MEETING ABOUT
ISRAEL'S NOT GIVING UP "ONE GRAIN OF SAND."

7. WITH SOME ELOQUENCE, AND ACCOMPANYING GESTURES, KAMEL
EXPLAINED THAT PRESIDENT SADAT "IS REALLY HURT." HE HAS
MAINTAINED CONSTANTLY THAT HE NEEDS SOMETHING NEW FROM THE
ISRAELIS, YET AFTER EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE LEEDS
CASTLE TALKS AND MY VISIT HERE, HE HAS GOTTEN NOTHING NEW.
WHEN SADAT HAD HEARD THE ESSENCE OF THE AMERICAN IDEAS
WHICH I HAD PRESENTED, KAMEL REPEATED AGAIN THAT THE
PRESIDENT WAS "REALLY HURT." HE INDICATED THAT FOR THE
U.S. TO TAKE THIS APPROACH WOULD GET NOWHERE BUT GIVE
"THE OTHER SIDE" GROUNDS FOR SABOTAGING OF U.S.-ARAB
RELATIONS. AT THIS POINT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WENT INTO
AN ARGUMENT HE WAS TO REPEAT SEVERAL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE
MEETING--THAT THE "IMAGE" OF THE U.S. IN THE ARAB WORLD
IS AT STAKE, AND THAT PRESIDENT SADAT AND OTHER MODERATE
ARAB GOVERNMENTS ARE THE ONES WHO ARE GOING TO "PAY THE
PRICE DIRECTLY" IF THAT "IMAGE" IS DESTROYED. HE SAID
THAT THE U.S. STOOD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, FOR PEACE, FOR
PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, AND NOW IT MUST LIVE UP TO THOSE
PRINCIPLES. "IF THAT IMAGE IS DESTROYED," HE SAID,
"NOTHING HAPPENS TO YOU DIRECTLY, BUT A LOT CAN HAPPEN
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TO US DIRECTLY." HERE HE REFERRED TO THE THREAT FROM
FORCES IN THE ARAB WORLD WHO ARE OUT OF SYMPATHY WITH THE
MODERATES AND WHO WOULD BENEFIT. HE SAID THAT "GOD HAS
SENT US THE GREATEST GIFT IN BEGIN, YET YOU HESITATE
TO CONFRONT HIM AND SOLVE THE QUESTION ONCE AND FOR ALL."

HE WENT ON TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE QUESTION TO BE SOLVED WAS ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ARAB TERRITORY.

8. TO UNDERScore HIS POINT, KAMEL MADE A CONTRAST BETWEEN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS SOMALIA AND ISRAEL. REGARDING SOMALIA, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT HAD BROKEN WITH THE RUSSIANS AND APPEALED TO THE U.S. AND THE WEST FOR HELP, BUT THE U.S. HAD REFUSED TO GIVE THAT AID BECAUSE OF THE SOMALI INVASION OF OGADEN. EILTS INTERJECTED THAT ONLY MILITARY AID HAD NOT GONE TO SOMALIA BUT THAT ECONOMIC AID HAD. KAMEL AGREED THAT WHAT HE HAD MEANT WAS MILITARY AID AND CONTINUED ON WITH HIS ANALYSIS. HE SAID THAT THE U.S. HAD REFUSED THIS AID BECAUSE THE OGADEN WAS PART OF ETHIOPIA BUT AT LEAST SOMALIA COULD ARGUE THAT THE PEOPLE OF OGADEN WERE ETHNICALLY THE SAME AS THOSE IN SOMALIA. THE SAME COULD NOT BE SAID, HE NOTED, OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ARAB TERRITORY. IN THE MIDDLE EAST IT WAS ISRAEL WHO INVADED AND OCCUPIED ARAB LAND, TERRITORY WHERE THE PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THEM AND HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THEM, HE SAID. YET, THE U.S. IS SUPPORTING ISRAEL IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE. SO, HE CONCLUDED, YOU CAN WITHHOLD AID FROM ONE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE OF ITS INVASION OF ANOTHER'S TERRITORY, AND YOU ARE HELPING THE OTHER TO MAINTAIN ITS INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF TERRITORY.

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9. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE U.S. HAS SPECIAL RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND PRESIDENT SADAT SAYS THAT IS OK. THE U.S. CAN HAVE A DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT WITH ISRAEL; EGYPT WOULD NOT OBJECT, BUT LET THOSE ARRANGEMENTS BE FOR

ISRAEL WITHIN THEIR OWN BORDERS. THE U.S. HAS PRINCIPLES, HE SAID, "AND YOU SHOULD STICK TO THEM." HE UNDERLINED AGAIN THAT THE U.S. WAS DISTORTING ITS IMAGE BEFORE THE WHOLE WORLD, AND THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE EXPLOITING THAT DISTORTION. "WE HATE THEM (THE RUSSIANS)" HE SAID, "BUT WHAT THEY ARE SAYING IS HARD TO ANSWER."

10. KAMEL NOTED THAT PRESIDENT SADAT'S INITIATIVE HAD WON HIM PUBLIC SUPPORT IN THE U.S., ESPECIALLY IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE. BUT EGYPTIAN MEANS ARE LIMITED, HE SAID, AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MUST HELP EGYPT TO CONSOLIDATE WHAT IT HAS ACHIEVED IN PUBLIC OPINION. ASKING PRESIDENT SADAT TO HAVE EGYPT GO TO ANOTHER MEETING AFTER PRIME MINISTER BEGIN "SLAPPED US" WOULD ONLY RUN THE DANGER OF UNDERMINING THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT SADAT AND ALL MODERATE REGIMES.

11. HE SAID THAT EGYPT CARES VERY MUCH TO MAINTAIN ITS VERY GOOD RELATIONS AND COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. TO
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SOLVE PROBLEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST. EGYPT WANTS PEACE, HE SAID, BUT IT IS NOT READY TO CONCEDE TERRITORY. NO ONE SUPPORTS THE PROPOSITION THAT THE ARABS SHOULD CONCEDE TERRITORY, HE SAID, "EXCEPT SOME SENATORS AND SOME JEWS." WITH GREAT FEELING HE SAID THAT AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR KREISKY HAD TOLD PRESIDENT SADAT THAT BEGIN BELIEVES THE U.S. WILL IN THE END DO WHAT HE (BEGIN) WANTS BECAUSE ISRAEL IS AN ELEMENT OF STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. "IF THE U.S. HAS THAT UNDERSTANDING, IT IS CATASTROPHIC," SAID KAMEL. "THEY HAVE 3 MILLION, 5 MILLION PEOPLE--WHO CAN'T GET SYMPATHY OF THEIR NEIGHBORS OR THE SYMPATHY OF THE WHOLE WORLD. WHO ARE THEY TO BE YOUR POLICEMEN?" BY CONTRAST, HE SAID, EGYPT WITH ITS 40 MILLION PEOPLE, ITS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA, WAS IN THE POSITION TO "DRAW THIS WHOLE AREA TO YOUR SIDE." HE SAID EGYPT HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPE, AND WITH THE ONE EXCEPTION OF THE POST-1967 PERIOD, HAS ALWAYS WANTED GOOD RELATIONS. HE WOULD HATE TO SEE THE DAY, HE SAID, THAT THE U.S. IS FORCED TO BRING THE "SIXTH, SEVENTH OR EIGHTH FLEET" TO OCCUPY TERRITORY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, SO AS TO PREVENT THE RUSSIANS FROM COMING IN.

12. EGYPT HAS NEVER SAID NO TO DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU, AND THAT'S OK, HE SAID. BUT HE WANTED THOSE NEGOTIATIONS PUT IN THE RIGHT FRAMEWORK, KAMEL SAID. BEGIN GIVES THE U.S. BAD ANSWERS TO ITS QUESTIONS, HE SLAPS US, AND WE CANNOT GO

INTO THOSE NEGOTIATIONS, HE CONTINUED. FOR YOU TO WANT THOSE NEGOTIATIONS UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, HE SAID AGAIN, IS DISTORTING THE AMERICAN IMAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. PEOPLE IN THE WHOLE AREA WILL START LOOKING SOMEWHERE ELSE TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS, AND WHOEVER TRIES TO STAND

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IN THEIR WAY WILL BE THROWN OUT. THE WHOLE WORLD IS AGAINST BEGIN, HE SAID, YET WHEN THE TIME COMES YOU TELL US THESE IDEAS OF YOURS, WHICH LEAD NOWHERE AND PUT "SHAKY GROUND" UNDER THE MODERATES. THE U.S. MUST "CONFRONT THIS FELLOW," HE SAID. "IT IS YOUR BEST CHANCE, SAY NO TO HIM, AS YOU DID ONCE TO HITLER. IF NOT, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HIS POLICIES WILL LEAD TO WAR." HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE CATASTROPHE WOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO THE POWERS IN THE AREA BUT INCLUDE THE RUSSIANS AND THE U.S. KAMEL COMPLETED HIS LONG STATEMENT BY SAYING THAT EGYPT, IN ASKING FOR JUSTICE, WAS NOT BEING UNJUST TO ISRAEL, SINCE ISRAEL TOO WOULD BENEFIT FROM PEACE.

13. I SAID I WOULD LIKE TO ANSWER SEVERAL OF THE POINTS RAISED BY KAMEL, BEGINNING WITH THE ASSURANCE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REALIZES THE DEPTH OF EGYPTIAN CONCERNS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AMERICAN IMAGE IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD. THE U.S. STANDS ON ITS STATED POSITIONS REGARDING THE PEACE PROCESS AND RESOLUTION 242, I SAID. KAMEL INTERRUPTED HERE AND SAID THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO HEAR CLEARLY AND SPECIFICALLY, NOT IN GENERAL TERMS, THE AMERICAN POSITION. I SAID I WANTED TO MAKE SURE KAMEL UNDERSTOOD THAT THE AMERICAN OBJECTIVE WAS TO ACHIEVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242, NOT JUST TO STATE THE U.S. POSITION AND HAVE NOTHING HAPPEN; THEREFORE, THE U.S. WANTED TO STATE ITS POSITION IN SUCH A WAY TO HAVE AN EFFECT ON CHANGING THE SITUATION SO AS TO SEE HOW WE CAN MOVE PRACTICALLY FROM THIS POINT WHERE WE ARE TODAY. THEREFORE, I WANTED TO DISCUSS IDEAS KAMEL HAD FOR

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MOVING FORWARD.

14. BUT FIRST, I WANTED BRIEFLY TO CLARIFY WHAT THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HAD AND HAD NOT SAID ABOUT PRESIDENT SADAT'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON SUNDAY. THE SPOKESMAN HAD SAID WE WERE DISAPPOINTED THAT NO DIRECT TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE, BUT THE SPOKESMAN HAD NOT SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EGYPTIAN POSITION. KAMEL JUMPED IN TO SAY THAT THE PUBLIC DID NOT SEE THIS DISTINCTION AND THAT THE EFFECT HAS BEEN TO SAY POSITIVE THINGS ABOUT WHAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE DONE WHILE GIVING A NEGATIVE CAST TO THE EGYPTIAN POSITION. I SAID THAT SOMETIMES I FELT THAT I LIVED IN AN "ALICE IN WONDERLAND WORLD" BECAUSE IN ISRAEL I AM ALWAYS BEING TOLD THAT THE U.S. THESE DAYS ALWAYS PRAISES SADAT AND CRITICIZES ISRAEL. NOW HERE I WAS BEING TOLD THAT THE U.S. DOES NOTHING BUT PRAISE ISRAEL AND CRITICIZE EGYPT.

15. AT THIS POINT I MADE CLEAR THAT I WAS NOT SPEAKING FROM INSTRUCTIONS BUT WAS TALKING ON A PERSONAL BASIS IN AN EFFORT TO GET A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF EGYPTIAN THINKING. I WANTED THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE SECRETARY HAS BEEN PUT IN A DIFFICULT POSITION BECAUSE HE MADE A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS AFTER THE LEEDS CASTLE MEETING, WHICH HAD BEEN CHECKED FIRST WITH KAMEL
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AND DAYAN, INDICATING THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD GO TO THE AREA IN FULL ANTICIPATION OF THERE BEING ANOTHER ROUND OF DIRECT TALKS. THE CURRENT SITUATION, THEREFORE, IS STRAINING THE CREDIBILITY OF THE PUBLIC POSTURE OF THE U.S., AND THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HAD TO STATE THE OBVIOUS--THAT WE ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT NO TALKS CAN TAKE PLACE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SHOULD NOT INTERPRET THAT REACTION, I SAID, AS A CRITICISM OF THE SUBSTANCE OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. OUR REGARD FOR SADAT IS AS HIGH AS EVER, I SAID, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO SAY THAT.

16. I NOTED THAT WE HAD SAID WE WERE DISAPPOINTED IN

ISRAEL'S ANSWERS TO THE TWO QUESTIONS POSED TO DAYAN. THE ONE EXCEPTION IN THIS DISAPPOINTMENT NOW, I CONTINUED, WAS THE RECENT ISRAELI STATEMENT ABOUT DISCUSSING THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. THAT STATEMENT BY DAYAN IN THE KNESSETT, IN OUR VIEW, OPENED THE DOOR TO THE NEW POSSIBILITIES.

17. KAMEL DISAGREED. HE SAID THE ISRAELI POSITION MADE SENSE IF YOU WERE GOING TO NEGOTIATE FOR 50 YEARS, AND EGYPT WOULD NOT GIVE THAT POSITION "THE SLIGHTEST WEIGHT." ISRAEL CLAIMS SOVEREIGNTY OF THE TERRITORY, AND THEN AGREES IT WILL DISCUSS THE QUESTION, HE SAID. "THIS GETS US NOWHERE, TO DISCUSS," HE SAID, "AND FOR YOU TO SAY OTHERWISE DISTORTS YOUR IMAGE." I SAID THAT THE DAYAN STATEMENT WAS A "STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION." KAMEL INTERRUPTED TO SAY THAT IT WAS "SHOCKING" TO THE PRESIDENT TO HEAR THAT SAID. IT WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW THE AMERICAN IMAGE WAS DISTORTED. IT WOULD NOT HELP WITH ISRAEL, SINCE ISRAEL WOULD NOW JUST TAKE MORE FROM THIS AMERICAN POSITION.

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18. I TURNED THE CONVERSATION TO POSSIBLE IDEAS THAT KAMEL MIGHT HAVE FOR MOVING THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD, NOW THAT THE ROUND OF TALKS WE HAD ANTICIPATED WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE SECRETARY BEFORE HE ARRIVES TO KNOW EGYPTIAN THINKING ON THIS SUBJECT. KAMEL SAID IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS AND ASKED TO KNOW WHAT IT IS IN SPECIFIC TERMS THAT THE U.S. WILL DO TO CARRY OUT THE COMMITMENTS MADE AT CAMP DAVID. I SAID THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE IDEAS TO DISCUSS WHEN HE ARRIVED. KAMEL COUNTERED THAT THE U.S. HAS ALREADY STATED POSITIONS ON THE KEY ISSUES, AND HE WANTED TO GO INTO THESE POSITIONS IN SOME DETAIL. I SAID THAT WE COULD GO OVER THE GENERAL AMERICAN POSITION ON SUCH MATTERS AS INTERPRETATIONS OF RESOLUTION 242 AND WITHDRAWAL. IN RESPONSE TO KAMEL'S QUESTION IF IT WAS STILL OUR POSITION THAT ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL SHOULD ONLY INCLUDE "MINOR MODIFICATIONS" OF THE 1967 LINES ON THE WEST BANK, I AFFIRMED THIS WAS SO, NOTING PRESIDENT CARTER HAD HIMSELF SAID THIS. BUT TO BE MORE SPECIFIC ON WHAT WE MIGHT SUGGEST TO THE PARTIES AS A WAY TO REACH AGREEMENT, I SAID, WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT.

19. KAMEL REPEATED WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME PREVIOUSLY, THAT THE U.S. APPROACH COULD TAKE ONE OF TWO FORMS: (1) TO PRESENT SOMETHING TO BOTH SIDES AS A BASIS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. IN THIS APPROACH, HE SAID, THE

AMERICAN POSITION MUST BE "CRYSTAL CLEAR ON PRINCIPLES,"
MEANING FOR INSTANCE, TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST BANK
AND GAZA WITH ONLY MINOR RECTIFICATIONS AGREED BETWEEN
THE PARTIES. IN THIS APPROACH, HE SAID, MODALITIES SUCH AS

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A TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL COULD BE NEGOTIATED, BUT THE
OVERALL POSITION MUST BE CLEAR TO ISRAEL FROM THE BEGIN-
NING. (2) THE SECOND APPROACH, HE SAID, IS TO COME OUT
WITH A TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT PROPOSITION THAT WILL HAVE
PRINCIPLES IN IT AS WELL AND WHICH THE U.S. WILL BE
PREPARED TO DEFEND AT THE UNITED NATIONS. REGARDING
PALESTINIANS, ESPECIALLY, HE SAID EGYPT WILL WANT TO KNOW
EXACTLY WHAT IS THE AMERICAN POSITION. THE IDEAS FOR THE
AMERICAN APPROACH GIVEN THEM THE OTHER DAY, HE SAID, HAD
REALLY SCARED THEM, IF THAT IS TO BE THE AMERICAN COMMIT-
MENT AFTER NINE MONTHS OF THE SADAT INITIATIVE. I
EMPHASIZED THAT THESE WERE GENERAL IDEAS OF THE DIREC-
TION OF OUR THINKING, NOT THE FINAL ONES. THEY WERE STILL
BEING STUDIED IN WASHINGTON AND I HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS TO
GO FURTHER. KAMEL MAINTAINED THAT EGYPT COULD NOT AGREE
TO NEGOTIATE "ON THE BASIS OF" RESOLUTION 242; EILTS SAID
HE HAD UNDERSTOOD FROM SOME OF KAMEL'S EARLIER COMMENTS
THAT EGYPT WISHED TO NEGOTIATE ON BASIS 242. KAMEL
CLARIFIED THIS BY SAYING NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE ABOUT
IMPLEMENTING RPT IMPLEMENTING THAT RESOLUTION. EGYPT
HAS ACCEPTED ITS OBLIGATIONS, PEACE AND SECURITY, AND
NOW ISRAEL SHOULD ACCEPT ITS OBLIGATIONS--WITHDRAWAL.
WHAT SCARES EGYPT, KAMEL SAID, IS "YOUR WAVERING." "WE
THINK IT IS THE RESULT OF THE AMERICAN DOMESTIC SITUATION,"
HE SAID. "YOU SHOULD NEVER DOUBT YOUR INTERESTS IN THIS

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AREA OF THE WORLD ARE VITAL. TO ACT ONLY FROM THE DOMESTIC SCENE WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC. REMEMBER , HE SAID, WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES, WHO THREW OUT THE RUSSIANS, WHO WANT TO ESTABLISH DEMOCRACY HERE, AND WHO CAN GO AND SPEAK IN AFRICA AND BELGRADE.

20. AL-BAZ SAID THAT EGYPT WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT WHATEVER FORMULATION THE U.S. COMES UP WITH REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF 242, IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS NOT TO BE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE INTERPRETATION OF WITHDRAWAL PRINCIPLES. WE HAVE BEEN SPECIFIC ABOUT THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE, WELL BEYOND WHAT IS CONTAINED IN RESOLUTION 242, HE SAID, AND NOW GREATER SPECIFICITY IS NEEDED ABOUT WITHDRAWAL.

21. I SAID THAT THE U.S. INTERPRETATION OF THE WITHDRAWAL PROPOSALS REMAINED AS ALREADY STATED, THOUGH IN FINDING A FORMULATION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES THERE MIGHT HAVE TO BE SOME "CONSTRUCTIVE AMBIGUITY" IN PUTTING FORWARD A FORMULATION. WHAT WE BELIEVE WOULD BE A FAIR AND REASONABLE SETTLEMENT, AND WHAT WE MIGHT SUGGEST AS A FRAMEWORK THE PARTIES COULD HOPEFULLY AGREE ON, ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME THING. I NOTED THAT AMBIGUITY IS BUILT INTO THE RESOLUTION. I STRESSED AGAIN THAT THE U.S. INTERPRETATION OF THE WITHDRAWAL PRINCIPLES IN THE RESOLUTION HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE ITS PASSAGE IN 1967-- THERE SHOULD BE WITHDRAWAL IN RETURN FOR RECOGNITION AND PEACE. THAT WAS THE ESSENCE OF THE TERRITORY FOR PEACE EQUATION. THE U.S. HAS NEVER SAID THAT THIS WITHDRAWAL PRINCIPLE IN 242 SHOULD PERMIT SUBSTANTIAL TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS. THE AMBIGUITY IN THE RESOLUTION, I SAID, HAD BEEN PRIMARILY DICTATED BY THE SITUATION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, WHERE NO RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL BORDERS

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EXIST. TO HAVE BEEN CATEGORICAL ABOUT TOTAL WITHDRAWAL WOULD HAVE BEEN GOING BACK TO THE ARMISTICE LINES AND A DIVISION AGAIN OF JERUSALEM. I ALSO NOTED THAT THE POLITICAL CLIMATE GENERATED BY THE KHARTOUM SUMMIT HAD AFFECTED THE DRAWING UP OF RESOLUTION 242. I NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME PROGRESS IN TRYING TO TRANSLATE THE LANGUAGE OF 242 INTO SPECIFICS. FOR INSTANCE, IT WAS NOW AGREED BY BOTH SIDES THAT THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE CANNOT BE SOLVED SIMPLY AS A REFUGEE PROBLEM, AS IS STATED IN 242. MAHER INTERJECTED THAT THE NOTION OF PEACE AND NORMAL RELATIONS HAS ALSO BEEN EXPANDED AND DEFINED, AND

THAT IS WHY AL-BAZ IS STRESSING THAT THE TIME HAS COME
ALSO TO DEVELOP THE SPECIFICS FOR WITHDRAWAL.

22. STERNER NOTED THAT THIS IS A KEY REASON WHY WE
BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, WHERE
CONDITIONS CAN BE CREATED TO GET TO THE FINAL POINT, A
PEACE SETTLEMENT. THROUGH TAKING THE FIRST STEPS THROUGH
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES, YOU CAN START SPELLING
OUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE END, STERNER SAID. YOU
CAN'T SPELL ALL THAT OUT NOW. KAMEL RESPONDED THAT EGYPT
HAS NEVER ASKED THAT THE DETAILS BE SPELLED OUT. WHAT IS
NEEDED IS FOR ISRAEL TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL
AND TO GET A CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING OUT THE
DETAILS. PRESIDENT SADAT HAS SAID REPEATEDLY THAT HE DOES
NOT WANT TO INDULGE IN THESE DETAILS. KAMEL ASKED ONCE
AGAIN WHY JUST ONCE ISRAEL COULD NOT BE CONFRONTED AND
TOLD WHAT MUST BE DONE TO IMPLEMENT 242. HE MEANT, HE
SAID, THAT THEY ACCEPT THEIR OBLIGATION FOR WITHDRAWAL IN
RETURN FOR THE OBLIGATIONS THE ARABS HAVE ALREADY ACCEPTED
FOR PEACE AND SECURITY.

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23. "PUT IN THE SECRETARY'S MIND," KAMEL SAID, "THAT
THIS MAN (BEGIN) MUST BE CONFRONTED AND STOPPED, AND THAT
WE ARE NOT ASKING HIM FOR A NEW OBLIGATION. HE IS
LEADING YOU TOWARD CATASTROPHE THROUGH HIS CENTERS OF
INFLUENCE IN THE U.S."

24. AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING, IN ANSWER TO YET
ANOTHER REQUEST FROM ME FOR EGYPTIAN IDEAS ABOUT WHAT
SHOULD BE DONE NEXT, KAMEL LOOKED DOWN AND, READING
FROM A HAND-WRITTEN PIECE OF PAPER ON THE TABLE, LAID

OUT THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO. SECRETARY VANCE COULD GO TO ISRAEL, HE SAID, AND TELL THEM PRESIDENT SADAT'S PROPOSAL THAT PEACE NEGOTIATIONS COULD GO FORWARD, IF THEY EXCLUDED TERRITORY AND SOVEREIGNTY. THE ANSWER WILL BE NO, KAMEL SAID, BUT THE SECRETARY SHOULD DO IT ANYWAY. THEN THE SECRETARY SHOULD COME TO EGYPT WHERE THE EGYPTIANS WOULD SAY NO TO THE ISRAELI NO. AT THAT POINT, HE SAID, "YOU CAN COME OUT WITH AMERICAN PROPOSALS."

25. HE SAID THAT IF THE U.S. WERE TO PROPOSE A NEW ROUND INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES, ASSUMPTION BY THE PARTIES OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER RESOLUTION 242 AND THE PRINCIPLES OF INADMISSIBILITY OF ACQUISITION OF TERRITORY BY WAR-- EGYPT WILL CONSIDER RPT CONSIDER ATTENDING. KAMEL DID
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NOT SPELL OUT WHAT "INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES" HE MEANT, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE MAIN POINT WAS THAT THE PARTIES SHOULD ACCEPT THE OBLIGATIONS HE HAD ALREADY OUTLINED UNDER RESOLUTION 242. THIS AMERICAN PROPOSAL, HE SAID, WOULD INVITE THE PARTIES THEN TO TALK ABOUT PEACE, SECURITY AND WITHDRAWAL.

26. "GETTING US TOGETHER ON AN AMBIGUOUS BASIS IS CATASTROPHIC FOR US," HE SAID. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION WHETHER SAUDI ARABIA WOULD SUPPORT GOING FORWARD ON THIS BASIS, KAMEL QUICKLY ANSWERED YES. HE ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT JORDAN AND EVENTUALLY SYRIA WOULD ALSO JOIN ON THIS BASIS.

27. REGARDING PLO PARTICIPATION, HE TOLD ATHERTON THAT WHILE THERE IS FERMENT WITHIN THE PLO AND MODERATE PALESTINIANS MAY JOIN EVENTUALLY, THAT QUESTION CAN BE LEFT ASIDE FOR NOW.

28. REGARDING ISRAELI PARTICIPATION ON THIS BASIS, KAMEL SAID THAT IF THEY WERE TO COME, THEY WOULD BE "MOST WELCOME." IF THEY DID NOT, THEY WOULD ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY, LIVING IN ISOLATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND EVENTUALLY LOSING THE SUPPORT OF THE U.S.

29. I ASKED IF KAMEL DID NOT MEAN TO INCLUDE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS AMONG THE ISSUES THAT REMAIN TO BE NEGOTIATED, TOGETHER WITH PEACE, SECURITY AND WITHDRAWAL. KAMEL AGREED THAT THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE ASSURED THE SAME RIGHTS ANY PEOPLE HAVE TO THEIR LAND. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, SEEM TO GIVE THIS ISSUE EQUAL STANDING WITH THE ISSUE OF WITHDRAWAL ON WHICH HE DWELLED REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION, ALTHOUGH HE HAD AT ONE POINT
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EARLIER IN THE CONVERSATION EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT OUR ONETIME SUGGESTION THAT "LEGITIMATE" BE DROPPED BEFORE "RIGHTS".

30. KAMEL ENDED THE MEETING BY ASSURING ME OF THE EGYPTIAN DESIRE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE AND FRANK CONSULTATION WITH THE U.S. EGYPT WAS VERY KEEN ON THIS CLOSE COOPERATION, HE SAID, AND EGYPT HAD PUT ALL ITS HOPES IN THE U.S. AS THE ONE WHO COULD SOLVE THIS PROBLEM IN THE MIDDLE EAST. BY OBTAINING JUSTICE, THE U.S. SAVES ITS VITAL INTERESTS FOREVER IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WHILE OBTAINING GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS BETWEEN THE ISRAELIS AND THE ARABS. "I AM NOT A CLEVER MAN," THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID IN A CLOSING PERSONAL NOTE. "BUT I WAS BORN UNDER A LUCKY STAR. GOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN GOOD TOME SO PLEASE HEED CAREFULLY MY WORDS TO YOU." EILTS

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